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JFK Cabinet Talked About Killing Castro

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The Rockefeller Commission has documents linking Cabinet officers in the Kennedy administration to discussion of the possible assassination of Cuban Premier Fidel Castro, authoritative sources say.

The sources said the documents consist of:

- The minutes of a secret Aug. 10, 1962 meeting which show that the assassination of Castro was brought up at a meeting of high administration officials and then immediately dismissed.

- A memo written two days later by an assistant to former Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara directing the Central Intelligence Agency to develop contingency plans for such an operation.

Meanwhile, Sen. Frank Church, D-Idaho, said Friday that his Senate intelligence committee is exploring "in great particularity" the question of how high up in the government alleged orders for murder may have been given.

"There are many unanswered questions," a visibly angry Church told reporters after a closed three-hour session in which CIA Director William E. Colby was questioned on "the extent of the involvement that may have occurred in the matter of assassinations."

One source who has seen the minutes of the Aug. 10 meeting of a special group known as Operation Mongoose said that "the subject (of killing Castro) was raised and immediately dismissed."

However, this source and one other official confirmed the existence of a subsequent memo written by Maj. Gen.

Edward G. Lansdale mentioning the development of contingency plans for the murder of Castro.

The memo was withdrawn immediately, one source said, although he acknowledged that subsequent attempts were made on Castro's life.

Both McNamara and Lansdale told a reporter they had no recollection of either the memo or the meeting. "I never would have tolerated consideration of a plan for assassination," McNamara said. "I sure don't remember that," Lansdale said about the memo.

In addition to McNamara, participants in the Aug. 10 meeting of the group whose official title was Special Group (Augmented) included former Atty. Gen. Robert F. Kennedy, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, CIA Director John A. McCone and McGeorge Bundy, special assistant to President Kennedy for national security affairs, the sources said.

Rusk, McCone and Bundy have appeared before the eight-member Rockefeller panel while sources said McNamara and Lansdale have been questioned by commission staff members.

Sources stressed that the minutes are ambiguous and do not make clear whether any approval or disapproval for a plot against Castro was given.